

OFFICIAL DEBATES
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OF THE
DOMINION OF CANADA.

FOURTH SESSION — FOURTH PARLIAMENT.

45 VICTORIÆ, 1882.

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COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE NINTH DAY OF FEBRUARY TO THE
SEVENTEENTH DAY OF MAY, 1882.

Edited and Indexed by JOHN CHAS. BOYCE, Assistant to Chief Reporter.



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Amor de Cosmos petitions Prime Minister John A Macdonald re: suppressing Chinese immigration in the House of Commons, May 12, 1882.

De Cosmos, Amor. "Suppressing Chinese Immigration." *House of Commons Debates*. Canada. Parliament. House of Commons. 4th Parl., 4th sess. 1882. (Pages 1476 to 1478)

down at a late period of the Session when late sittings are necessary, and when the official reporters are tired out, so that it is impossible to discuss them, and impossible for the *Hansard* reporters to report fully the speeches of hon. gentlemen on both sides, on subjects which they consider as very important. It is impossible to report them in such a way as to have the views of hon. members conveyed to the country through the medium of the official reports. The other evening, as an instance, I had the honor to make some remarks on a subject of immense importance to my own county. I spoke, perhaps, for half an hour, and spoke purely to the question before the House, as the leader of the Government knows. I referred to the comparative necessity of providing public buildings of a certain kind in my own county. I spoke on the subject with considerable earnestness, and I thought with considerable force, but in the *Hansard* report there was not a single word of what I said on that occasion. That may have been all right. I know, at the same time, that remarks made by hon. gentlemen opposite, and the criticisms of members of the Government who did not agree with me entirely, were not reported. I only refer to the matter to show that speeches made in the early part of the day may be thoroughly reported, while, owing to the Government's delay in bringing down important measures, and the consequent lateness of the sittings, there are many speeches that cannot be reproduced in the pages of *Hansard*.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. STEPHENSON moved that the third report of the Select Committee appointed to supervise the debates of the House be adopted.

Mr. BLAKE. Is that the report with reference to the contracts.

Mr. STEPHENSON. Yes.

Mr. BLAKE. I think the hon. gentleman should give us some idea of the comparative cost of the service as involved in these changes.

Mr. STEPHENSON. The same contractor has the contract for the composition as this year, but the composition will be 60 cents instead of 40 cents a thousand; the press work per token is 30 cents; folding per sheet one-tenth of a cent; alterations per hour, 25 cents; extra copies of speeches per thousand, 75 cents; the binding is less than it was before, being 90 cents per volume; the translation costs \$1.75 per page, compared with \$2.50 under the present contract.

Mr. MACKENZIE. The composition seems high.

Mr. STEPHENSON. The hon. member must bear in mind that the work is all night work, and if we are to have the daily issue of the *Hansard* laid on the Table of the House at three o'clock every day, we need not expect to get the composition done for the ordinary day rate. The regular trade rates in the city are, I believe, 33½ cents a thousand, and when you take into consideration—to use a printers' phrase—that there is no "fat" in this matter, that it is all "solid" matter, I think the price cannot be regarded as excessive, considering the rate paid to printers for ordinary day work. Moreover, there was only one tender put in, which we did not accept on its first presentation; but we had a conference with them and arranged prices and terms, so that they are made the most satisfactory we could possibly make them, and I think they will be satisfactory to the House and the country.

Mr. BLAKE. Does the hon. gentleman say that the general result is that the cost of the service remains the same.

Mr. STEPHENSON. About the same.

Mr. KILLAM.

CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

Mr. DECOSMOS. Chinese immigration appears likely to become a very serious matter. From time to time, the question of Chinese immigration into the Province of British Columbia has been brought before the House; from time to time, the Legislative Assembly of that Province passed resolutions and sent Addresses to the Governor General, asking the Government here to take some measures to stop the flow of Chinese laborers into that Province; but, up to the present moment, no action has been taken by the Government whatever. A recent telegram, however, brings the matter more forcibly under our notice, and it is a matter of pretty general comment by the press throughout the Dominion, that the Chinese are flowing into British Columbia in such numbers as to prove destructive, in all probability, to white labor. A telegram, dated Victoria, May 9th, states:

"24,000 Chinese in all are expected before August. The Chinese in the Province will number 32,000, and will outnumber the whites."

Now, Sir, when we recollect that the United States Government recently enacted a law to prohibit the immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years; that along the coast of Mexico there is little or no employment for Chinese; that when we come to the Central American States, there is none, or very little; that when we go to New Grenada, Peru, and Chili, we find that there is little or nothing for them to do; that when we cross the ocean to the Hawaiian Kingdom, we find that they are driving out the native population, and the other population too; that when we go to the Australian colonies, we find that the colony of Queensland has for some years had two Acts on its Statute-book, sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, in order to keep out the Chinese—one of which imposes a poll-tax of £10 sterling on every Chinaman who enters the country, and the other a tax of £3 sterling on every Chinaman who enters the mines—we can easily understand that these countries are vigorously protecting themselves against Chinese immigration. Last December, I wrote to the Agent-General of New South Wales in London, and I received the following reply:—

"WESTMINSTER CHAMBERS,
"VICTORIA STREET, 9th January, 1882.

"DEAR SIR,—In reply to your note of the 16th ultimo, asking for a copy of New South Wales Act respecting Chinese immigration, I regret my inability to comply with your request. There has not been time for copies to reach me from the colony. Immediately I receive them I shall have great pleasure in sending a copy for your acceptance. I know by a newspaper telegram that a poll-tax of £10 has been determined upon, and that ships arriving in the colony are not allowed to carry more in proportion to tonnage than, I believe, one for every one hundred tons.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"SAUL SAMUELS,

"Agent-General for New South Wales."

The great object of the Chinese in coming to British Columbia will be, failing to get employment there, to make their way across the border to the United States. The United States, however, by the recent Act has prohibited them. The *New York Times* of May 9th, states:

"The President has signed the new Bill to suspend the immigration of Chinese laborers for a period of ten years. It is to be hoped that this will settle the much-vexed Chinese question for a time at least. The Bill was drawn with special reference to the objections raised by the President in his message disapproving the first Bill passed by Congress. As it now stands, the law suspends the immigration of Chinese laborers, whether skilled or unskilled, or employed in mining. It provides for a system of certificates, to be issued on the identification of Chinese persons now living in this country, or who may hereafter arrive here under provisions of the law authorizing them to come. The naturalization of all Chinese is expressly forbidden. Various fines and penalties are imposed upon the masters of vessels who shall bring unauthorized Chinese persons in this country, and upon any who shall forge, alter or make fraudulent use of the certificates to be issued to Chinese who are allowed residence in the United States. The Bill, as it has become a law, does not infringe upon any of the rights of China as defined in existing treaties. The people of California will probably be satisfied with all its features, unless they may object to the shortness of the term during which immigration is to be suspended."

Now, I would ask the Government whether they are prepared to introduce any measure this Session, no matter how brief, with a view to repress the immigration of Chinese into British Columbia? There has been a general feeling abroad that in the absence of white labor in that country a certain number of Chinese would be admitted into the country to work on the railway; but even that the people have objected to. But, under the circumstances, I believe the general feeling would be to allow a certain number in for this purpose. If, however, they are to come into the country, by the middle of August, to the number of 24,000, the country will be overrun by Chinese, as it will then have 32,000, who will, as stated in the telegram, outnumber the entire white population. It strikes me that in view of the action of the United States Government, some action ought to be taken by the Canadian Government to repress that immigration; and I put it to the hon. gentleman opposite, in the common interest, as well as in the interest of the country, whether or not something cannot be done to relieve British Columbia from the Chinese difficulty?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It is rather inconvenient that this subject should be brought up without notice of any kind; and the hon. gentleman must be satisfied with a very brief and perhaps unsatisfactory answer. No complaints have reached the Government of serious interference with white labor in British Columbia, from the influx of Chinese labor. In fact, there is such a want of white labor in British Columbia, that if you wish to have the railway finished within any reasonable time, there must be no such step against Chinese labor. It is certain that British Columbia suffers very much from the want of a steady flow into it of white immigration; and until the Pacific Railway is finished, I fancy that difficulty will always continue. It is of very great importance, in order to enable British Columbia to get the advantage of the flow of emigration from Europe, that the railway should be finished as early as possible. When Mr. Onderdonk was here in the beginning of the Session, he told me he employed every white man he could get, and that he tried to get every white laborer from Canada that he needed. He asked me, for instance, if I could recommend to him a reliable, a respectable man, a master builder or carpenter, who might get him the carpenters he wanted. I found him such a man, and he took over from Canada fifty or sixty carpenters to help him. Mr. Onderdonk said also that he expected at one time to be able to get sufficient white labor from the United States; but such was the extent to which the construction of new railroads were proceeding in the United States this year, that he could really get no satisfactory labor, but only the culls and refuse, persons who could get no employment at San Francisco, to work on the British Columbia Railway. I presume that this influx of Chinese is greatly caused by the demand for labor for the construction of the railway. Whether the hon. gentleman is correctly informed as to 24,000, or 10,000, or 5,000 Chinese coming into British Columbia, I have no means of knowing. But if they are coming, it is merely to work on the railway, to finish it as soon as possible, and we may well put up with the temporary inconvenience, as I understand it, of the presence of these Chinese. A good many people in Vancouver Island, who keep house, tell me that if they had not Chinese servants, they would have none at all; and I have no doubt things are still worse on the mainland. The Chinese bring no women to British Columbia with them, and are not likely, therefore, to be permanent settlers. Nor do I hear that there is any danger of miscegenation or a mingling of the races. So that after they have finished this particular work they can go back to China again. Whenever a practical difficulty arises, it is quite in the hands of the Legislature to deal with it, in the manner in which it has been dealt with, after a great many years experience, in the United States, and as it has

been dealt with in the Australian Provinces. At present every white man can be employed in British Columbia at good wages. The Government have had no information of an alarming influx of Chinese. This is the first I heard of these 24,000 Chinese immigrants, and I think the report must be mythical. I have seen in the newspapers, however, a statement that several vessels had been chartered to bring over Chinese laborers to work on this railway, to which I think there can be no objection. I share very much the feeling of the people of the United States, and the Australian colonies, against a Mongolian or Chinese population in our country as permanent settlers. I believe they would not be a wholesome element for this country. I believe that it is an alien race in every sense, that would not and could not be expected to assimilate with our Arian population; and, therefore, if the temporary necessity had been overcome, and the railway constructed across the continent, with the means of sending the European settlers and laborers into British Columbia, then it would be quite right to join to a reasonable extent in preventing the permanent settlement in this country of Mongolian, Chinese or Japanese immigrants. At present it is simply a question of alternatives—either you must have this labor or you cannot have the railway. The Government have not had their attention called to this subject of late; but it is a matter of so great importance that it will engage our attention, and that of every public man in this House, to discover how far we can admit Chinese labor without introducing a permanent evil to the country by allowing to come into it, in some respects, an inferior race, and, at all events, a foreign and alien race. Of course, British Columbia, from its geographical position and proximity to the ocean, is that portion of the Dominion that will chiefly suffer from an influx of this description of settlers.

Mr. DECOSMOS. I am glad to hear the hon. leader of the Government express an opinion favorable to repressing Chinese immigration at some time in the future; but I believe it will be found, by the experience of the present year, that that future will not be very distant. The point, however, to which I wish to draw your attention is this: The hon. gentleman has intimated that the Government has had no information bearing on the question of Chinese immigration. I have only to draw his attention to this fact: that at almost every Session of the Legislature of British Columbia since 1871 resolutions or addresses have been passed by the Legislative Assembly and forwarded to the Secretary of State of Canada dealing with this question. The hon. gentleman remarked that Chinese were useful as servants in Victoria. No doubt they are used as servants there, and are appreciated, but the number of servants in Victoria altogether would not probably amount to over 200, which is a very small number in comparison with the 4,000 or 5,000 Chinese in British Columbia, as shown by the Census report, and since that Census 4,000 or 5,000 more have been added to enter into competition with white labor. With regard to the point raised that Chinese labor on railways would be very acceptable in the absence of white labor, I believe that as a choice between evils the Province would accept Chinese labor for the purpose of constructing the railway; but, at the same time, the Legislature and the people are looking anxiously to this Government to take some action to put down Chinese immigration, and such action would be the more easy now since there is a ten years limit put on such immigration in the United States.

Mr. ROCHESTER. I do not know what the difficulty is with regard to Chinese labor in British Columbia, but I do know the people of Canada would be glad if they had Chinese or other labor. Agriculturists in Ontario, find it utterly impossible to procure labor. During the last few days, a few batches of immigrants arrived in Ottawa, and they were only a few hours here when they were carried off to

different parts of the country, and ten times as many more would have been employed had they arrived. We are in the same position with regard to our mill work. Mill hands are very scarce, and it is almost impossible to get a supply of laborers to do the work required to be done. British Columbia has so much work to do in building railways, that she ought to be thankful to get in Chinese labor, or the labor of any other country, to do it. The people of Ontario would be very glad if they could have an opportunity of employing Chinese labor.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, in moving the third reading of Bill (No. 158) to readjust the representation in the House of Commons and for other purposes, said: The point reserved was whether we could not make the elections in Manitoba the same day as in the other Provinces. On making enquiry I came to the conclusion it would not be safe to alter the law as it is now.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). It will be remembered by the House that in discussing this Bill in Committee yesterday, when the electoral division of the north riding of Bruce was under consideration, the hon. the leader of the Government stated, in response to the motion made by the hon. member for that riding, that he was willing to adopt some change with reference to that division so far as regarded its population. Though not entirely satisfactory to my own views as opposed to those of hon. members opposite, yet there is no doubt it would tend to equalize the population in a greater degree than they are equalized in the Bill as it now stands. It would be without any great political consequence it is true, but it would, notwithstanding, in a degree, remedy the great inequality of population that exists between the west and north riding of Bruce in this Bill. I therefore beg to move the following amendment, which I am sure the hon. the leader of the Government will accept:—

That the Bill be not now read a third time but be re-committed to the Committee of the Whole House, with instructions to amend the same by providing that the village of Port Elgin shall form part of the electoral district of the north riding of the county of Bruce.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. When the hon. gentleman said, last night, that Saugeen and Port Elgin should be added to North Bruce, I said the Government was prepared to go half way and give Port Elgin. Is the hon. gentleman serious in proposing to take away Port Elgin from Saugeen and put it in North Bruce, or does he propose that the strip of land lying between Port Elgin and the present southern boundary of North Bruce shall be added to North Bruce?

Mr. PATERSON, With the view of meeting the hon. gentleman, and taking what I could in the way of carrying out the principle of the Bill, I move this amendment first, and then, having given the hon. gentleman an opportunity to yield gracefully on this point, in favor of which he has expressed himself, I will give him an opportunity to go the proper length by attaching the township of Saugeen to North Bruce as well.

Amendment (Mr. Paterson) agreed to, on the following division:—

YEAS :		
Messieurs		
Amyot,	Flynn,	Mongenais,
Anglin,	Fortin,	Montplaisir,
Arkell,	Gillies,	Mousseau,
Bain,	Gillmor,	O'Connor,
Bannerman,	Girouard (Jac. Cartier),	Olivier,
Barnard,	Girouard (Kent),	Orton,
Beauchesne,	Grandbois,	Quimet,
Béchar,	Gunn,	Paterson (Brant),
Benoit,	Guthrie,	Pickard,
Bergeron,	Hackett,	Pinsonneault,
Bergin,	Haggart,	Platt,
Blake,	Hay,	Pope (Compton),

Mr. ROCHESTER.

Borden,	Hilliard,	Poupore,
Bourassa,	Holton,	Reid,
Bourbeau,	Homer,	Richey,
Bowell,	Hooper,	Rinfret,
Brecken,	Huntington,	Robertson (Hamilton),
Brown,	Irvine,	Rochester,
Bunting,	Jones,	Rogers,
Burnham,	Kaulbach,	Rouleau,
Burpee (St. John),	Killam,	Routhier,
Burpee (Sunbury),	King,	Ryan (Montreal),
Cameron (Victoria),	Kirkpatrick,	Rymal,
Carling,	Kranz,	Scott,
Caron,	Langevin,	Scrifer,
Cartwright,	Lantier,	Shaw,
Casey,	Laurier,	Sutherland,
Casgrain,	Macdonald (Sir John),	Tellier,
Cimon (Ochicoutimi)	McDonald (Cape Breton),	Thompson,
Colby,	McDonald (Victoria, N.S.),	Tilley,
Coughlin,	Macdonell (Lanark),	Trow,
Coupal,	Mackenzie,	Tupper,
Coursol,	Macmillan,	Tyrwhitt,
Daly,	McCarthy,	Valin,
Daoust,	McDougall,	Wade,
Dawson,	McLelan,	Wallace (Norfolk),
Desaulniers,	Malouin,	Wallace (York),
Domville,	Merner,	Wheler,
Dumont,	Méthot,	White (Cardwell),
Farrow,	Fiset,	White (Hastings),
Fleming,	Mills,	White (Renfrew).—124.

YEAS :
Messieurs

Bill,	Landry,	Ross (Dundas),
Bolduc,	Lane,	Rykert,
Cimon (Charlevoix),	McCallum,	Sprule,
Costigan,	McRory,	Vallée,
Gigault,	Ogden,	Vanasse.—15.

Amendment considered in Committee and reported.

On motion for third reading,

Mr. PATERSON. I desire to follow up this amendment with another motion I had prepared with reference to the matter, and which the First Minister will agree with me is a necessary motion to be made. I could not think, of course, of detaching Port Elgin from the township of Saugeen, and therefore, the hon. gentleman agreeing with me in that view, as he did, I am happy to say—

Sir JOHN A. MACDONAD. Not by a long chalk; that will not do.

Mr. PATERSON. I am now about to follow it up with a motion that the township of Saugeen in which is the town of Port Elgin, shall also be added to the north riding of Bruce. I am sure it will commend itself to the favorable consideration of the House. Consequently, I beg to move:

That the Bill be re-committed with instructions to provide that the township of Saugeen shall form part of the electoral district of the north riding of the county of Bruce.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I think this amendment shows to what extent hon. gentlemen are willing to go—I was going to say they are factious. Last night it was proposed that Saugeen and Port Elgin should be put into the north riding. Well, I suggested that we would go half way and put in Port Elgin. That was scouted by the hon. gentlemen opposite, but to-day we have just voted for it. The hon. gentleman's proposition is factious. The hon. gentleman said: "Let Saugeen go, we will go half-way;" and therefore the Bill passed as it was originally introduced. The hon. gentlemen changed their minds, and they now want the full loaf. We offered half a loaf by adding Port Elgin to North Bruce, and they voted for it. Now they want me to give them the whole loaf and allow Saugeen to go into North Bruce. I shall vote against that.

Amendment (Mr. Paterson, Brant) negatived on the following division:—

YEAS :		
Messieurs		
Anglin,	Fleming,	Mackenzie,
Bain,	Flynn,	Malouin,
Béchar,	Gillie,	Mills,